

Beaker, Collared Urn, Post Deverel-Rimbury and Saucepan Pottery from Drayton

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Technical report 22

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(text commissioned by Northamptonshire Archaeology)

FIRST MILLENNIUM BC POTTERY FROM DRAYTON

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Earlier first millennium pottery, in its broadest sense, comes from a minimum of 38 contexts, and comprised somewhere between about 270 sherds weighing 2.5 kilograms and 350 sherds weighing 2.7 kilograms (see [Appendix](#)), the lower numbers being equal to or higher than that of some of the county's earlier first millennium type assemblages (e.g. Knapp Farm, Bosham and Yapton — Hamilton 1987; 1997). It is therefore of some significance. Its study however is hampered by the disappearance of the feature sherds (**LBA pots 2-7**) from the only context incorporating a range of these, and secondly, and more importantly, the impossibility in non-feature sherds of distinguishing some similar grades of flint tempered pottery belonging to different periods/ traditions, in particular coarse post DR (*hereafter* PDR) and DR pottery, and fine to medium PDR and saucepan pottery. That said, it is clear from preliminary illustrations made of the now lost feature sherds and the thin bodies and fingered finishes of many of the surviving non-feature sherds, that the bulk of the assemblage belongs to an early (Late Bronze Age) phase of the PDR pottery tradition (cf. Seager Thomas 2008, 40), with — literally — a handful only attributable to the Middle and Middle to Late Iron Ages.

Post Deverel-Rimbury at Drayton

The PDR pottery from Drayton, which was recovered in small quantities from features in all parts of the site, except for area A, has analogues in assemblages from a number of sites on the Coastal Plain, including notably, Selsey Seaside Field, a large assemblage that incorporates both bowls and jars similar to those from Drayton (Seager Thomas 2001, figs 3.3, 4.24, 6.49 etc.), St Bartholomew's Close, Chichester, which yielded a jar with a similar finger-tip impressed neck cordon (Seager Thomas in prep.), and both Littlehampton and Ford, which yielded jars with similar rim forms to Drayton's **LBA pot 5** (Seager Thomas 2008, figs 8.6 & 8.10), all of which can be attributed to the floruit of the tradition locally, dated to between c. 950 and 800 cal BC (*ibid.*, 38; Hamilton 2003, appendix 6.2).¹ Likewise its fabrics ([Table 1](#)), the proportions of these — in so far as they can now be reconstructed — and the assemblage's wider relationships, with the biggest individual context assemblages coming from pits (AOC — area 1, pits 279 and 341), and smaller ones

¹ The numbers of PDR assemblages is increasing rapidly and the attribution of the forms and fabrics comprising them constantly improving. For this reason the attribution of these assemblages differs from that published. For an up to date discussion of the sequencing of the Coastal Plain's PDR pottery see Seager Thomas in prep.

from a range of pits, ditches and post holes, are similar. Drayton stands out in one way only, and that is that — as reconstructed — the shoulders of **LBA pots 5 and 6** are weaker than usual, but this may simply reflect their *preliminary* reconstruction; otherwise it appears to have been a fairly bog-standard assemblage whose detailed analysis serves only to confirm what we already know about the tradition and the period locally and as such need not detain us further.

| Code | Summary | Description | Finish |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <i>FMF</i> | Fine to medium flint | Fine sandy matrix; c. 3–5% medium to (occasionally) very coarse sand-sized burnt flint. | Unoxidized (dark grey to brown grey with red brown core) — burnished (MIA pots 1–3) |
| <i>FMFQ</i> | Fine to medium flint with quartz sand | Sandy matrix with rare mica; 7% medium to very coarse sand-sized burnt flint. | Oxidized (red brown to buff) exterior and unoxidized (dark grey) interior — roughly finished (LBA pot 1). |
| <i>MF</i> | Medium flint | Fine sandy matrix; 10–12% medium sand to (mostly) small granule-size burnt flint | Oxidized to unoxidized (brown) — burnished (body sherds associated with LBA pot 2–7) |
| <i>MFM</i> | Medium flint with micaceous rock | Sandy matrix; c. 10% medium sand to (mostly) small granule-size burnt flint; c. 2% rock with quartz, mica and an unidentified black mineral. | Oxidized (brown) exterior and unoxidized (dark grey) interior — burnished (body sherds associated with LBA pot 2–7) |
| <i>FCF</i> | Fine and coarse flint | Fine sandy matrix; patchy 7–15% medium sand-sized and c. 3% large granule to very small pebble-sized burnt flint. | Oxidized (orangey brown) exterior and unoxidized (dark grey) interior — weathered but possibly burnished (body sherds associated with LBA pot 2–7) |
| <i>(S)</i> <i>MCF</i> | Sparse medium to coarse flint | Fine sandy matrix; c. 5% medium sand to large granule-sized burnt flint. | Oxidized (dark brown) exterior and unoxidized (dark grey) interior — burnished (body sherd associated with LBA pot 1). |

Table 1. Drayton LBA and MIA fabrics

Saucepan Pottery

Unambiguous Middle Iron Age and Middle Iron Age or *possibly* slightly later Iron Age feature sherds were present in three widely separated features located in the northwest part of the site (ASE — phases 2 & 3; and an assessment trench in NA — area A). These were in a flint-tempered fabric, which, though unoxidized externally, has a slightly reddish hue internally (**Table 1**), and comprise fragmentary rim sherds from two differently decorated saucepan pots (one with two wide burnished lines and one with a thinner, dot-impressed burnished line below the rim), and a closed mouth jar with an externally expanded rim (**MIA pots 1–3**).² The forms of the saucepan pots and the fabric are widely characteristic of Middle Iron Age pottery locally (e.g. in the Torberry assemblage referred to above: Cunliffe 1976). Owing to its very small size, there is little more to be said about this assemblage, except that it is one of several of similar small size from the Coastal

² These sherds are too small to illustrate usefully.

Plain, found associated with earlier prehistoric assemblages (e.g. from Angmering and Ford Airfield 2 — Seager Thomas in prep.). This suggests, alternatively, that more saucepan pottery than realized is going unrecognized, a different intensity of pottery use during this period, the avoidance during the Middle Iron Age of areas that had previously been occupied, and/ or, as suggested for the site's EBA pottery, the available catchments were different, all of which would be worth considering in a future, wider analysis of the pottery of this period.

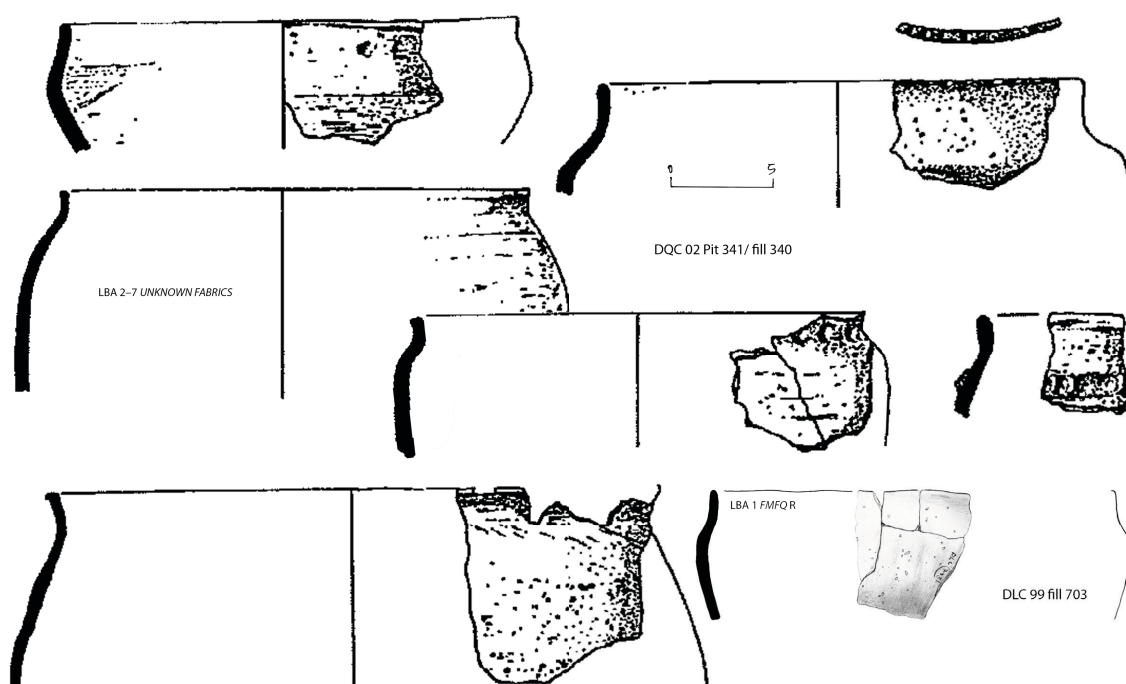


Figure 1. Post Deverel-Rimbury pottery from Drayton. Pots 2-7 have disappeared (adapted from Raymond 2003)

THE EARLY BRONZE AGE POTTERY

Pottery belonging to the Early Bronze Age comes from seven widely separated contexts and is represented by a handful of sherds from a minimum of between three and — assuming sherds from the latter were not widely dispersed across the site — five pots, three Beakers and two Collared Urns. The Beakers, in typical sandy grog and grog and flint-tempered Beaker fabrics, were rusticated with fingertip, finger pinched ‘crows foot’ (EBA pot 1)³ and fingernail impressions (EBA pot 2); and the Collared Urn, in a single sandy grog-tempered fabric, with twisted cord impressions (EBA pots 3 & 4) (Fig. 2). Somewhat unusually EBA pot 4 was heavily soot-soaked (cf. Seager Thomas 2008, 25).

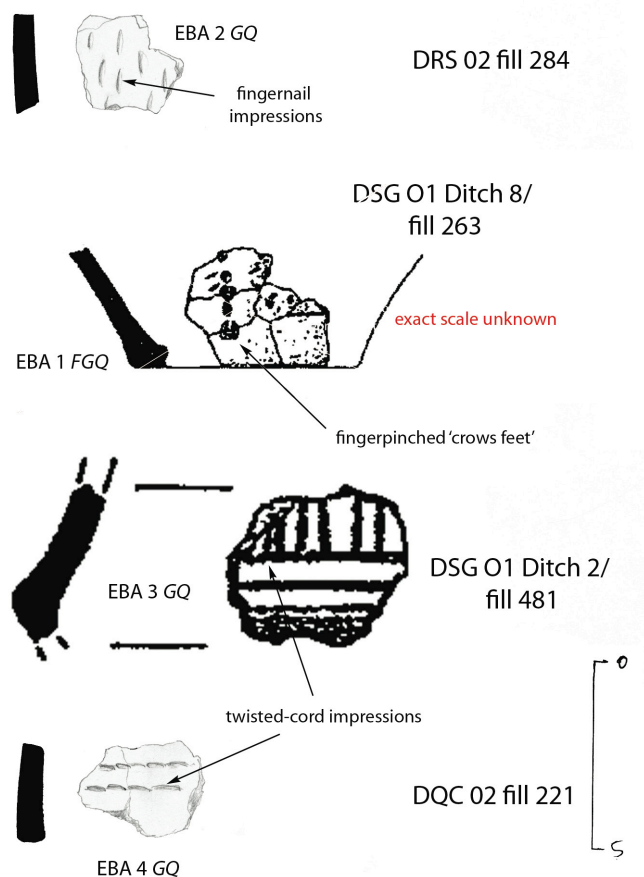


Figure 2. Beaker (1, 2 and 4) and Collared Urn (3) from Drayton (1 and 3 after Raymond 2003)

The primary interest of this material lies in its sparsity. Drayton is one of half a dozen or so sites locally, which have yielded tiny assemblages of Early Bronze Age pottery, usually Collared Urn,

³ Missing. The reconstruction of this pot in the assessment report seems overly large and has therefore been redrawn here at half its original scale. The original drawing EBA pot 3, which is also missing, is reproduced at its original scale.

associated with larger assemblages of later Bronze Age pottery, including sometimes probable cinerary urns. As at Drayton, most were probably residual, and as such are difficult to interpret. It seems likely however that the way in which they have come down in some way reflects their use during the Bronze Age.

Of particular interest is the varying representation of different Bronze Age traditions across sites. For many, the Collared Urn is first and foremost a cinerary urn (e.g. Burgess 1980, 89–95; Woodward 1995, 200–1). But why the difference between Collared Urns and later cinerary urns found in similar environments, and, more importantly, Collared Urns found in different environments locally? No doubt part of the answer is that there were fewer people on the Plain during the Early Bronze Age; but it might also be that the features in which they were deposited differed. If so we should perhaps *not* be thinking of Drayton's as cinerary urns at all.

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